

BRIDGEPORT FEMA DISASTER ASSISTANCE
JUNE 24, 2010 TORNADO

The City of Bridgeport was hit with a tornado on Thursday – June 24, 2010. The National Weather Service stated that Thursday's tornado packed 100 mile an hour winds. Senator Joe Lieberman toured Bridgeport with Mayor Bill Finch to assess public infrastructure, business and homeowner damages.

On August 20, 2010, The State of Connecticut officially requested that President Barak Obama declare a major disaster for Fairfield County as a result of the severe weather, including a tornado. This declaration provide federal assistance to the communities, businesses, and residents impacted by the severity and magnitude of the storm's damages. On August 23, 2010, the CT congressional delegation sent President Obama a letter supporting the State of Connecticut's major disaster declaration request. The full text of the letter is below:

August 23, 2010

The Honorable Barack Obama
The President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We write in strong support of the request submitted by the State of Connecticut on August 20, 2010 for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to declare a major disaster for Fairfield County as a result of severe weather, including a tornado, which occurred on June 24, 2010. The impacted communities will require both Individual and Public Assistance to recover from the severity and magnitude of the damages.

According to the National Weather Service, an EF 1 Tornado touched down in the City of Bridgeport with winds of at least 100 miles per hour and severe storms impacting neighboring communities, including Stratford and Trumbull. An example of the tornado's concentrated damage can be measured in Bridgeport, where nine buildings were partially or fully collapsed, including at least three that were destroyed to their foundation. Fifty Bridgeport families, mostly renters without insurance, were left temporarily homeless. Some roads within the city still remain closed.

The damages, which are mostly localized in Bridgeport and Stratford, are estimated to exceed \$3 million. Since Connecticut does not have a county government, the financial burden falls disproportionately on the state and these municipalities. By the State of Connecticut's estimates, the damage amounts to \$15.27 per capita in Bridgeport and \$16.91 per capita in Stratford—figures more than five times the current per capita county indicator for federal disaster assistance and more than 12 times the statewide indicator.

The City of Bridgeport is one of the most economically distressed communities in the country. While the unemployment rate in Fairfield County is 8.0 percent, the City of Bridgeport faces a striking 13.7 percent. In the East Side of Bridgeport, where the tornado touched down and caused some of the most devastating damage, 42 percent of the population lives below the poverty line.

The severity of damage and the impact on families and businesses in Bridgeport and Stratford is sizable. Their recovery efforts are compounded by March's storms and flooding across the state, which was declared a major disaster. Connecticut is in desperate need of federal assistance to respond to this severe weather event that will only become available with the declaration of a major disaster. Therefore, we strongly support the State's request for federal assistance and urge you to make this declaration.

We appreciate your consideration and timely attention to this request on behalf of the people of Connecticut.

Sincerely,

Christopher J. Dodd
Jim Himes
John B. Larson
Christopher S. Murphy

Joseph I. Lieberman
Rosa L. DeLauro
Joe Courtney

INSURANCE CLAIMS

Connecticut residents impacted by the rain and wind storm may call the CT Insurance Department's toll-free hotline at 800-203-3447 with questions about claims. Residents calling this hotline can get questions answered about homeowner's policies, flood insurance and catastrophe claims.

Residents can also visit the state CT Insurance Department's website at www.ct.gov/cid to get tips for making the claims process easier. Contact your Local Emergency Management Director at http://www.ct.gov/demhs/lib/demhs/emergmgmt/local_emg_mgmt_public_contacts_1_10.pdf with information on uninsured damages to your home, property, or business as a result of the March 2010 storms.

The CT Department of Insurance <http://www.ct.gov/cid/cwp/view.asp?Q=458040&A=3299> has compiled a "Consumer Resource Page – Flood Insurance" with important information:

- Immediate Disaster Assistance
- Connecticut American Red Cross
- InfoLine 211
- Consumer Services – How to File a Complaint
- National Flood Insurance Program
- FEMA Resources
- Fact Sheets/FAQs on Flood Insurance and Homeowner Storm Claims
- Volunteer Resources